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Preached at the Opening of the  
General Assembly  
OF THE  
*Church of Scotland,*  
IN THE  
High Church of *Edinburgh,*  
On the 2d of *MAY* 1734.  
BEFORE  
His Majesty's High Commissioner.

*By the Reverend JOHN GAUDIE Professor of Divinity in  
the College of Edinburgh, and Moderator to the former  
Assembly.*



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To the MOST HONOURABLE  
WILLIAM-HENRY

Marquis of *Lothian*,

Earl of *Ancrum*, Viscount of *Bryen*,  
Lord *Ker* of *Newbottle*, *Oxnam*, *Fed-*  
*burgh*, *Dolphington* and *Nisbet*, Knight  
of the most Antient and most Noble Or-  
der of the *Thistle*,

HIS MAJESTY'S High Commissioner to  
the General Assembly of the Church of  
*SCOTLAND*,

THIS  
DISCOURSE

Is humbly dedicated by

*Your Lordship's most humble,*

*most obedient, and most*

*devoted Servant,*

JOHN GAUDIE.

[Faint rectangular stamp or label at the top of the page]

To the Most Honourable  
WILLIAM PEARCE

Member of the  
Institution of Civil Engineers



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of the

The M.A.  
the General Assembly of the  
SCOTLAND

THIS  
DISCOURSE

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John Pearce



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**SERMON, &c.**

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LUKE xix. 41, 42.

*And when he was come near, he beheld the  
 City, and wept over it,  
 Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou,  
 at least in this thy Day, the Things  
 which belong unto thy Peace! but now  
 they are hid from thine Eyes.*



IN the *Verses* immediately preceeding my Text, we have an Account of our blessed Saviour his going from *Bethphage* to *Jerusalem* in great Lowliness and humble State, with the loud Acclamations of the Multitude, and all Testimonies of Joy and Respect from them; they spread their Garments in the Way, and cut down Branches from the Trees, and strowed

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them in the Way. Where I cannot but observe, how vain a Thing popular Applause is : This very Multitude that now cry'd *Hosanna to the Son of David*, in a little Time chang'd their Note, and cry'd, *Let him be crucified*. Our Saviour did not court the Praise of Men, but approved himself to his Father ; and may that Mind that was in Christ, be also in all the Ministers of Christ : This would be a good Mean to prevent or allay that Hate, and calm these Storms that are often raised in the Church ; it would cut off Occasion from the People of venting their Carnality, one saying, *I am of Paul*, another, *I am of Apollos*.

In the Words I have read, we have an Account of our blessed Lord's Behaviour when he drew nigh to *Jerusalem* ; when he was come near to the City in the Descent of the Mount Olivet, when he was come so very nigh, as he could have a distinct View of the City, *he beheld the City*, he fixed his Eyes upon it, *and wept over it* ; considering their obstinate Infidelity in rejecting him, the promised *Messias*, and that unparallelled Destruction that was to come upon them in a little Time, as the just Punishment of their Infidelity and incorrigible Impenitency, both under *John's* Ministry and his own, he drops Tears over it.

As our Lord expresses his Compassion towards this then sinful and shortly after miserable City, by his Tears ; so also by his Words, *ver. 42. If thou hadst known* ; the Expression is abrupt and concise. I shall not trouble you with Criticisms about it, 'tis either a passionate Wish, *O that thou hadst known !* Or somewhat may be supplied, happy had it been for thee, *if thou hadst known* ; thou City of *Jerusalem*, even thou a City highly favoured  
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of God above any other, which he had chosen to place his Name there, to which he had sent his Prophets from Time to Time, and now *John the Baptist* and his own Son, to call them to Repentance; *at least in this thy Day*, the Day of God's Grace, and thy merciful Visitation, *hadst known*, that is, *improven the Things that belong to thy Peace*, that tended to the lengthning out thy Tranquility, and promoting thy Prosperity: *But now they are hid from thine Eyes*, because of your Impenitency, and not improving the gracious Dispensations of God's Providence towards you: Your Day of Grace and Mercy is gone, Judgment must take place, as it follows, *Verses 43. and 44. For the Days shall come upon thee, that thine Enemies shall cast a Trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every Side, and shall lay thee even with the Ground, and thy Children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one Stone upon another, because thou knowest not the Time of thy Visitation.* And every Title of what our Lord here threatned was accomplished on this impenitent City, as we may learn from *Josephus* his History of the *Jews*.

In the Words we may observe, 1. God's Goodness and Grace to some Nations; he affords them a Day of merciful Visitation, and sets before them *the Things that belong to their Peace*. 2dly, The Sin and Folly of these Nations; they do not know, that is, practically improve, *the Things that belong to their Peace*. 3dly, The just Judgment of God on such Nations, because they despise his Grace; in Wrath he hides *the Things that belong to their Peace from their Eyes*. Thus it was with the Church of the *Jews*; they were God's peculiar People, them he chose above all the Nations of the World to

put his Name among them ; for them he had done great and marvellous Things, he had given them his Statutes and Ordinances, which if they had kept, they had been happy ; many Time he had delivered them, yet they sinned the more : They did not know in their Day *the Things that belonged to their Peace* ; and therefore God in Wrath *bid them from their Eyes*. Thus it was with the Churches of the Lesser Asia ; the Church of *Ephesus* is commanded *to remember from whence she had fallen, and repent, and do the first Works*, and threatned, *Else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy Candlestick out of its Place, except thou repent*. And the Church of *Pergamus*, because she had those that held the Doctrine of the *Nicolaitans*, which Thing Christ did hate ; therefore he commands her *to repent*, and threatens, *Else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the Sword of my Mouth*. The Church of *Laodicea*, because she was *luke-warm*, and *neither cold nor hot*, Christ threatens, that he will *spue her out of his Mouth*.

But my Design is at this Time to lay before you, I. The great Things that our good and gracious God has done for this Church, and the happy Circumstances, which, by his favourable Providence, we are now in. II. To consider some of these Things, which seem to belong to our Peace, and which we ought to know in this our Day. III. To show the strong Obligations we are under to know them.

I. Then I shall lay before you the great Things that our good and gracious God has done for this Church, and the happy Circumstances, which, by his favourable Providence, we are now in.

When we, with other Nations of the World, were sitting in Heathenish Darkness, *Aliens from the*

*the Commonwealth of Israel, Strangers to the Covenant of Promise, without God, without Christ, without Hope in the World, our merciful God was pleased early to make the Day spring from on High to visit us, the Sun of Righteousness to arise unto us, with Healing under his Wings, and give us, who are among the outmost Isles of the Gentiles, for a Possession to his Son.*

After the Eastern Church had been overrun with *Mabometan* Delusions, and the Western with Antichristian Darkness, Ignorance, Error, Superstition and Idolatry, and was groaning under the Tyranny of that Man of Sin, the Pope and his Clergy, our gracious God was pleased to visit us in our low State, and, as in other Churches, so in this, he dispel'd the Darkness, made the blessed Morning of the Reformation to dawn, which, from small Beginnings, and against great Opposition, brought it to a national and legal Establishment.

What secret Plots and open Attempts there have been to destroy this blessed Work, and bring us back again into our former State of Darkness, Corruption and Slavery, and how God in his kind Providence has defeat them, they who read our History may know.

When before the happy Revolution, a Prince of the *Romish* Religion, and a great Zealot for it, sat on our Throne, how great were the Fears of all the Lovers of our *Zion* ! how vast were the Hopes of our Enemies ! Then surely had not the Lord been on our Side, and appeared for our Deliverance, *Rome* had swallowed us up ; *these proud Waters* had gone over our Soul : But in the Mount the Lord was seen, and his Hand brought Salvation unto us : When the Enemy said, *I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the Spoil ;*  
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*my Lust shall be satisfied upon them, I will draw my Sword, my Hand shall destroy them.* Then did God blow with his Wind, and wafted over to our Island, our late glorious Deliverer King *William* of blessed Memory, who rescued our Religion and Liberties from the very Jaws of Destruction : *Thus the Snare was broken, and our Soul escaped as a Bird : Then were our Hearts filled with Joy, our Mouths with Laughing, our Tongues with Singing, and the Faces of our Enemies with Confusion :* Then said we, *The Lord hath done great Things for us, whereof we are glad.*

They are Strangers in our *Israel*, who know not that ever since the Reformation, the Church of *Scotland* has been like *Rachel*, two Nations struggling in her Womb, two strong Parties who differed about the Form of Church-government, striving for the Mastery ; and sometimes one prevailing, sometimes the other, which has been the Occasion of very great Calamities ; what Finings and Imprisonments, yea Banishments, Presbyterians were subjected to, I need not mention, as being too well known ; yea it was Death by the then Law, in some Cases, for a Minister of the Presbyterian Persuasion to preach the Gospel, and for the People to hear them : But at the happy Revolution that Government was legally settled, which the Wisdom of the Nation judged most agreeable to the Inclinations of the People, and we judge to be founded on and agreeable to the Word of God. Ever since that happy Time, our Kings have been nursing Fathers to us, and our Queens nursing Mothers : Ever since, we have enjoy'd the Preaching of the Word, Administration of Sacraments, the Exercise of Discipline and

and Government, in the greatest Purity, and with the greatest Liberty and Safety:

A Spirit of Persecution has been declining, and is now gone, and I hope shall never again return into our Land. Our Church is now possess'd of a greater human Security, than ever it had before; so that, under God, we are safe against all Attempts of those that seek our Ruin, and we may promise to our selves a lasting Tranquillity, if we do not provoke our God against us, and destroy our selves with our own Hands. We live under a gracious Prince, who, on all Occasions, has declared his firm Resolution to maintain us in all our legal Rights and Privileges, and on whose Favour and Protection we may safely depend; A Prince that has sufficiently shewn his gracious Inclination to make us happy and easy, if we will allow our selves to be so. A Prince of whom we may justly say in the Words of the Queen of *Sheba*, and why should we not say it in Gratitude both to God and our Prince, *Because our God loved us to establish us for ever, therefore made he him King over us.* We have now a fair Opportunity put in our Hand of suppressing Popery, our old and restless Enemy: Of exercising Forbearance towards our Protestant Brethren, that differ from us in some Things, *not rendering Evil for Evil*, but gaining them by the Methods of Meekness and Love; Of suppressing Vice and Immorality: Of promoting the Kingdom of Christ, and the Interest of true Religion: Of maintaining Peace, Harmony and Order among our selves, and so making our Church a *peaceable Habitation, fair as the Moon, clear as the Sun, and terrible as an Army with Banners.*

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These are the great Things that our God has done for us: These are the happy Circumstances in which he by his kind Providence, has placed us: *This is our Day of merciful Visitation, and O that we, even we, in this our Day, may know the Things that belong to our Peace, before they be hid from our Eyes.*

And this leads me to the *Second* Thing proposed, *viz. To consider some of these Things which belong to our Peace, and which we ought to know in this our Day.*

And 1<sup>st</sup>, Universal Reformation of Heart and Life, is unquestionably a Thing that belongs to our Peace. That we return unto that God from whom we have departed, and fly to his Mercy through the Merits of the blessed Redeemer. If we seek God he will be found, but, if we forsake him, he will cast us off for ever: And Woe to us when God departs from us. That there is a general Defection among us, they are blind that do not see it, and hard-hearted that do not bewail it with Tears of godly Sorrow: A Defection not from Soundness of Doctrine, or Purity of Worship, or any Thing essential to the Constitution and Government: These Things, blessed be God, are still preserved among us, but from the Life and Power of Godliness. We have pure Doctrine and pure Worship, but impure Hearts and Lives: What Profaneness and Immorality abounds! What Contempt of God and Religion! So that many seem to have cast off the very Form of Godliness: And many of those that still retain the Form, do they not deny the Power of it? What a Defection is there from that Humility, Meekness, Self-Denial, that Heavenly-mindedness, Abstractedness from a present vain World, that charitable Temper of Mind, that are the distinguishing Characters

aders of true Christians: And, instead of these  
 shining Vertues of the Christian Life, what Pride,  
 Wrath, Self-conceit, Worldly-mindedness? What  
 Uncharitableness of Spirit, what rash judging, bitter  
 railing and Evil speaking? What despising of good  
 Men and God's Ordinances administred by them, be-  
 cause they are not of their Way of thinking and  
 acting as to some Things that are far removed from  
 the Vitals of true Religion, and wherein good and  
 godly Men may charitably differ? What Carnality  
 and Faction? One saying I am, of *Paul*, another I  
 am of *Apollos*: I say, how much of all these do at-  
 las too too much prevail among the Professors of  
 Religion in our Day! *O foolish and unwise People!*  
*Do we thus requite the Lord! Is not he our Father*  
*that bought us, hath he not made us and establish'd*  
*us?* But if we go on impenitently in such Cour-  
 ses, shall he not visit us for these Things?  
 Shall not his Soul be avenged on such a Na-  
 tion? Surely it becomes us who are Office-  
 bearers in God's House, vigorously to apply our-  
 selves to the Cure of these Evils; these are  
 the great Grievances we labour under, and the  
 Cure of them is, in a great Measure, under God, in  
 our own Hand; especially it becomes us, whom  
 God hath honoured to preach his Word, *to cry a-*  
*loud, and not spare; to lift up our Voice like a Trum-*  
*pet,* and sharply reprove Vices of all Kinds, not on-  
 ly of the openly profane, but also of the formal and  
 hypocritical Professor: Not fearing the Faces of  
 Men, nor regarding the Reproaches of Tongues.  
 Shall such Men as we fly and cowardly sneak from  
 our Duty, for Fear of a little popular Contempt,  
 when the Case so loudly calls for our Discharge?

it? No, let us up and be doing, and the Lord himself will be with us.

2dly, After our Duty to God, the next Thing I shall mention, as belonging to our Peace, is the Duty we owe to the Government and Laws, under which, by the good Providence of God, we live; for, as we are *to render to God the Things that are God's, so to Cesar the Things that are Cesar's*, by a dutiful Regard to his Laws, and a conscientious Obedience unto them. This is what Christianity strictly obliges us to, *Let every Soul be subject to the higher Power; submit yourselves to every Ordinance of Man in the Lord*; nor can any Thing justify our Disobedience or Non-Obedience to the Laws, but that they are contrary to the Laws of God: Indeed, in that Case no Power on Earth can bind; for we must obey God rather than Men: In all other Cases Obedience is our Duty. Yea, tho' a Law may be grievous, yet this will not justify our Disobedience to it, and spurning at it: No, we must patiently wait till God in his good Providence, and our Law-givers in their great Wisdom, shall give us Relief, prudently using the Means of humble Supplication, as becomes dutiful Subjects. This we are obliged to in Duty to God, whose Vicegerent the Magistrate is: And in Gratitude to a Government, under whom we enjoy so many Blessings; and in Duty to our Fellow Subjects, that we lay not a stumbling Block before them, and teach them Disobedience to the Laws by our Practice: For, if they see us disobey one Law, which we think a Grievance, they will think themselves safe to disobey other Laws, which they think grievous, especially if their Profit be concerned in the Matter, and may be greatly advanced by so doing.

3dly, It

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galy, It belongs to our Peace inviolably to maintain our Constitution, and not suffer it to be broke in upon by any Man or Party of Men. I apprehend the Constitution of the Church of *Scotland*, as now by Law establish'd, lies in a Parity among the Office-bearers, a Subordination of Judicatures, the Inferior to the Superior, and a meek Submission of all the Members to the Orders and Admonitions of the several Judicatures, especially of the Supreme. Now, whenever any of these is broke in upon, then the Constitution is invaded, and if not timely redress'd, may be overturn'd. And if any Brother should usurp Jurisdiction over his Fellow-Office-bearer, would be to introduce that Prelacy this Church has always contended against; so for interior Judicatories to disobey and counteract the Orders and Sentences, would be to introduce an Independency directly against our Constitution: Also for any to despise the Censures and Admonitions of Judicatures, especially the Supreme, would be either to set himself up an independent Lord and Master of his own Actions, every Man doing that which is right in his own Eyes, and cut himself off from the Society altogether: Whence must ensue Anarchy, and the utmost Confusion. We must therefore, if we consult our Peace, carefully maintain the Subordination of Judicatures, and the meek Submission of every Member to the Censures and Admonitions of the several Judicatures, especially the Supreme. It may be alledged, "That Church Authority may be screwed too far, to the Oppression of Conscience." I own it may be, and has been, as the best Thing may be abused to the worst of Purposes, which, by all Means, ought to be guarded against; but then, blessed be God, that is

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not the Case of our Church: And, on the other Hand, it must also be own'd, that so much Authority must be exercised in every Society, as is necessary to maintain Order and Peace among the Members of Society, else every Society must become a Chaos of Disorder and Confusion.

4thly, It belongs to our Peace, that we use our utmost Endeavours to keep the People easy, quiet and peaceable under the Government both of Church and State: And in order to this, we must never exaggerate any Grievance they may be under. This can tend to no good Purpose; it cannot redress the Grievance; it may tend to very bad Purposes, to fret their Spirits, alienate their Affections from the Government, and make them mutinous and tumultuous. We must let them know what manifold Grievances they are relieved from under the present Government, under which their Ancestors groan'd. We must study to make them sensible of the manifold Blessings and Privileges they enjoy, that our Forefathers were deprived of. They are not terrified with Fineings, Imprisonments, Banishments and Death as they were; but every Man may sit quietly under his own Vine, and his own Fig-tree, and none to make him afraid. They enjoy the Plenty and Purity of the Gospel; that Doctrine, Worship, Discipline, and Government of the Church that their Fathers contended for, legally establish'd amongst them. What would the Protestants of *Britain*, and Presbyterians of *Scotland* have given 50 Years ago to have seen the Days we see, and enjoy the Blessings we enjoy? How would their Souls have rejoiced in the Goodness of God, and blest him for such happy Circumstances?

As for us that are Ministers of the everlasting Gospel, let us never bring to the Pulpit, and endeavour

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your to interest our People in these Things, about which we may differ in Church Judicatures. To appeal to the People in these Matters, is to appeal, for the most Part, to an incompetent Judge; a Judge that cannot weigh the Reasons on each Side; that ordinarily hears only the Arguments of one Side; that is, for the most Part, determined by Affection rather than Judgment, and an implicate Faith rather than a well informed Understanding. Blessed be God these Matters do not concern their eternal Salvation. To engage them in these Matters is the Way to make them uneasy, insensible of God's Goodness, and unthankful for his Mercies, to dispose them to Schism, make them despise many useful Ministers of Christ, by whose Teaching their Souls might be much edified, and so hinder their spiritual Profit; and to beget in them a Spirit quite opposite to the Spirit of the Gospel: Let us therefore, who are Ambassadors of the Prince of Peace and Love, never bring any Thing to the Pulpit, either in Prayer or Preaching, much less to a Communion-Table, that favours of Passion and Sourness of Temper in ourselves, or has a Tendency to stir the Passions, sour and ruffle the Spirits of the People; but what has a Tendency to sweeten and calm their Spirits, and mould them into the Spirit and Temper of the Gospel; what tends to promote the Image of God in their Souls, to engage them to the Practice of every Christian Virtue, to inspire them with a Sense of the infinite Love of God towards them, and inflame their Hearts with Love to him, and Love to one another. Thus shall the People be quiet, and do their own Business, live in Love and Peace with their Pastors and Fellow-Christians, follow the Duties of their Callings, *and work out their Salvation with Fear and Trembling,* and  
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the God of Love and Peace shall be with them.

A 5th Thing that belongs to our Peace is, that we maintain Peace and Harmony among ourselves; if we are to follow *Peace with all Men*, much more with one another. Peace and Concord are the Cement and Beauty of Society: *Behold how good and how pleasant it is for Brethren to dwell together in Unity!* and Strife and Discord the very Bane and Ruin of it. *Where Envy and Strife is, there is Confusion and every evil Work: A Kingdom divided against itself cannot stand: If we bite and devour one another, let us take Heed we be not consumed one with another.* We are Brethren, why should we strive together? We are Servants of the Prince of Peace, the Message we bring is the Gospel of Peace, let us show ourselves Sons of Peace; and let there be no Contention or Emulation among us, except who shall be the brightest and most shining Ensamples to the People of Meekness, Humility, Patience, Self-denial, and Charity; who shall go before others in ministerial Labours, and Diligence in instructing the Ignorant, studying to convince and convert the Obstinate, to comfort them that are cast down, and to edify Saints in their most holy Faith. And in order to this, let us mortify our Lusts, our Pride and Passion; for, *from whence comes Wars?* Come they not from our Lusts that war in our Minds? Let us beg of God, the Father of Lights, from whom every good and perfect Gift comes down, that he would give us that Wisdom that is from above, which is pure and peaceable, gentle and easy to be intreated.

A 6th Thing I mention, as belonging to our Peace, is a prudent and mild Behaviour toward those that separate from us, and have deserted our Ministry, because we comply with the Laws of our Superiors,

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riors, which they are displeased with ; and we judge, are not contrary to any Law of God : Let us not treat them with Contempt or Anger, *the Wrath of Man never works the Righteousness of God*, but with Regard and Gentleness, that we may convince them, we would willingly do every Thing to please, but act against our Conscience, and transgress the first Commandment with Promise : That we have no Design upon them, but to be Helpers of their Joy, to promote the spiritual Profit and the eternal Well of their Souls : *If we are reviled, let us not revile again, but shew all Gentleness and Meekness, as the Servants of the meek Jesus, committing our Cause to him that judgeth righteously.* Such Behaviour, thro' the Blessing of God, cannot miss at last of conquering Obstinacy itself, and bring the People to the Ways of Peace and Unity ; at least, it will procure sweet Peace to our own Minds ; and tho' we should labour in vain, and spend our Strength for nought, yet, *surely our Judgment is with the Lord, and our Reward with our God.* As for our Brethren, who, by their undutiful Behaviour toward the supreme Authority of this Church, and their Obstinacy in that Course, have brought themselves under her Censures, as we are not to excuse or extenuate their Fault, much less to justify it ; but in any Ways to reprove them, and not suffer Sin upon them, else we shall be Partakers with them in their Guilt : So we are not to despair of recovering them to the Ways of Peace and Unity and dutiful Submission to that Authority they have despised : Let us therefore use all proper Means to restore them in the Spirit of Meekness and Love : Particularly, beside mild and brotherly Conference, to inform their Judgment and remove their Mistakes, let us apply to the Throne of Grace, that our kind and gracious God, who has  
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done so much for this Church, and who has the Hearts of all in his Hand, and can turn them as it pleases him, would touch their Hearts with a Sense of their Duty, and incline them to the Ways of Peace and Unity.

The last Thing I mention is, That we take the utmost Care to propagate a Succession of faithful Gospel Ministers to have the Care and Oversight of the Church, when we are laid in the Dust. *Let us not lay Hands suddenly on any Man*, and license none as Candidates for the holy Ministry, but such as are of good Learning, sound in the Faith, Men of Prudence and Moderation, of blameless and exemplary Lives; and, as far as we can judge, who have a saving Acquaintance with that Grace of God, they are to preach to others; who may be Ensamples to the Flock, and may feed them, not with Froth and Trifles, or Matters of doubtful Disputation, which minister Questions rather than godly Edifying; but with the sincere Milk of the Word, whereby their Souls may be nourish'd up unto eternal Life: Men that will not hunt after popular Applause, to get themselves a Name and a Following, but will study to please the People to their Edification, who have the Glory of God and the Good of precious Souls sincerely in their View. By our Care this Way, we may effectually, at least, in a great Measure, prevent any Inconvenience that could happen either from Presentations or popular Elections; seeing, probably speaking, we would put it out of the Power of the Patron to present, or the People to chuse a wrong Man. If we be careless and negligent as to this Matter of such Moment and Consequence to the Happiness of the Church, we shall be Partakers, with the unworthy Men we admit, in their Sin, the Blood of Souls that may perish through their Default will ly upon our Heads,

Heads, and God will require it at our Hands.

I proceed now to the third Thing proposed, to show the strong Obligations we are under to know this Day the Things that belong to our Peace. And,

1<sup>st</sup>, We are obliged to this in Duty and Gratitude, to that God who has done so great Things, and wrought so great Salvation for us; who hath deliver'd us out of the Hands of our Enemies, that we might serve him without Fear, who hath followed us with tender Mercy and Loving-kindness, and bestowed so many Blessings upon us both spiritual and temporal. Surely, such Receipts of Mercy call for a suitable Return of Duty and Gratitude; And what is it that the Lord requireth of us? but that *in this our Day we would know the Things that belong to our Peace*; that we would love him and serve him sincerely, that it may be well with us and our Children for ever.

2<sup>dly</sup>, We are obliged to this, from a grateful and just Regard to our worthy Ancestors, who have done and suffer'd so much, in order to procure our present happy Establishment. The best Blood in the Nation fell a Sacrifice in struggling against Popery and Slavery, and to bring about that blessed Settlement we now so peaceably enjoy: And shall we so wantonly throw away that which our Fathers purchased at so dear a Rate, and have faithfully transmitted to us their Posterity?

3<sup>dly</sup>, We are obliged to this in Justice and Compassion to our Posterity. We are Trustees for them, and have their valuable Concerns in our Hand: Their Happiness or Misery in a great Measure depends on our Management; if we eat four Grapes, their Teeth may come to be set on Edge, and they suffer for our Sin, and be made to take up that Lamentation, *Our Fathers have sinned, and are not,*  
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*and we have born their Iniquity:* Let us therefore know the Things that belong to our Peace in this our Day, and act such a Part, as Generations to come may rise up and call us blessed.

4thly, We are obliged to this, in order to the Peace of our own Minds in a Day of Trial. Indeed at present, by the Favour of God, our Mountain stands strong, and we may be apt to think, we shall never be moved; but all human Affairs are subject to Change: After the greatest Calm, a Storm may arise; and if it shall so fall out thro' the wise ordering of divine Providence, what a cutting Reflection will it be, that we had a fair Opportunity put in our Hand of promoting the Kingdom of Christ and the Prosperity of this Church, but we did not improve it? Then shall we with deep Regrete say, O that we, even we, had in our Day of merciful Visitation *known the Things that belonged to our Peace,* and lament, *that now they are hid from our Eyes.*

5thly, The Consideration of our Enemies, and them that wish our Ruin, lays us under very strong Obligations *to know in this our Day the Things that belong to our Peace.* Sure, we cannot do them a greater Pleasure, than, if after our gracious God has raised our Zion out of her Rubbish, stablish'd her on a firm Foundation, so that our Enemies can only with Envy behold her Happiness, without being able to disturb it; we shall with Axes and Hammers go to and pull down the carved Work of our Church. How would they triumph and say, *Aba, aba, our Eyes have seen it? Ab, so would we have it?*

6thly, The Consideration of the State of many of our Brethren the Protestant Churches in France, and otherwhere, should engage us to this. *The Heathen are come into God's Inheritance, his holy Temple have they defiled, they have laid Jerusalem on Heaps.*

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*The dead Bodies of his Servants have they given to be Meat unto the Fowls of Heaven, the Flesh of his Saints unto the Beasts of the Earth. Their Blood have they shed like Water round about Jerusalem, and there was none to bury them; such of them as remain are sitting by the Rivers of Babel, and hanging their Harps upon the Willows, and weeping, when they remember Zion. How precious would that Freedom and Liberty of Gospel-ordinances that we enjoy be to them? How light would all our Grievances be, on account of which we so murmur and fret? How thankful would they be to God and their Governors for the Half of what we enjoy, and make light of? When they look upon our Circumstances, will they not say, *Happy is the People that is in such a Case?**

*Lastly, If we do not in this our Day of merciful Visitation, know the Things that belong to our Peace, God may in Justice, and will at last in Wrath hide them from our Eyes. If the People and we go on bitterly to contend about the Way of calling Ministers, and they go on to loath the Bread of Life, because dispensed by Men against whom they have conceived unreasonable Prejudices, and Ministers give too much Countenance to them in so doing, at least, do not discountenance them, and sharply reprove them for it, may not God be provoked to remove their Teachers into Corners, and send a Famine in the Land, not a Famine of Bread, nor a Thirst of Water, but of hearing the Words of the Lord, so that the People shall wander from Sea to Sea, and from the North even to the East, and run to and fro and seek the Word of the Lord, and not find it. Then they shall know the Worth of that they now despise by the Want of it, and wish they had one of the meanest of these Ministers whom now they contemn*

and revile to break the Bread of Life to their Souls.

And now, my very Reverend Brethren, and right Honourable, and honourable Members of this National Assembly, I have delivered myself, with that Freedom and Plainness that I thought became the Station wherein the Vote of the last General Assembly placed me, and that became One that has the Peace and Prosperity of this Church sincerely at Heart: *If I forget her, let Skill pass from my Right-hand; let my Tongue cleave to the Roof of my Mouth, if I do not prefer her to my chief Joy:* That became One that desires to maintain upon his Spirit a deep Impression of that awful Account I must make to God for all the Actions of Life, so especially for the Discharge of my Duty this Day. Let me beseech you in the Bowels of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you will sincerely lay to Heart, in this our Day, the Things that belong to this Church's Peace, *before they be hid from our Eyes*, lest our God be provoked to take his Kingdom from us, and give it to a Nation that will bring forth better Fruits than we have done.

May our gracious God heal all our Breaches and Backslidings. May he yet delight to dwell among us and to do us Good. May he inspire all the Members of this Assembly with the Spirit of Wisdom, with well guided Zeal and Christian Moderation, with Charity and brotherly Love. May our blessed Lord and Master, according to his Word of Promise, be in the Midst of us, and may we all have a deep Sense of his Presence on our Spirits. May he overrule all our Consultations and Determinations, that they may tend to the Advancement of his Kingdom, and the Peace and Happiness of this Church. These Things, may God of his infinite Goodness, grant in great Compassion to this poor Church, for the Sake of Jesus. *Amen.* 4 00 38

F I N I S.